Alabama Baptist Historical Society

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL SESSION

OF THE

PROVIDENCE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

HELD WITH

BROAD STREET BAPTIST CHURCH, MOBILE, ALA.,

DECEMBER 5th and 6th, A. D. 1873.

MINUTES.

FRIDAY, December 5th, 1873.

The Providence Baptist Association was called to order by Rev. Joseph Mitchell moving that Bro. Wm. Spence take the chair as temporary Moderator, and Bro. D. P. Bestor, Clerk, *pro tem.*, which was carried.

Bro. Spence then took the chair—read from Psalms cxxvi. Singing.

Prayer by Elder Wm. Spence.

The Moderator then announced that the Association was ready for business—whereupon, Bro. Joseph Mitchell made a statement, the substance of which was, that he, as Moderator, after consultation with prominent brethren and the Chairman of the Executive Board, took the responsibility to postpone the meeting of the Providence Baptist Association, in consequence of the presence of yellow fever in Mobile, and published it in the "Register," but too late to reach all the brethren—Delegates from some ten churches met at Zion Church. He visited the Church and stated his action in the premises, and asked the delegates to endorse his course and that of the Board, if they could consistently do so, in postponing the Association; and according to his understanding, there was but one dissenting voice, and that he left the church supposing that the Association was postponed, not only by his own act as Moderator, but by the actual vote of the then present Delegates themselves.

Bro. M. G. Hudson, in behalf of the Missionary Board, and as a member thereof, addressed letters to several Churches represented at Zion, asking them to send Delegates to meet with Broad Street Baptist Church on Friday before the second Sabbath in December, to decide whether the body meeting with Zion was

really the Providence Baptist Association or not. If the decision was that the body at Zion was truly the Providence Baptist Association, then this body to be called an extra session of said body, or auxiliary thereto.

After several speeches by Brn. Nelson, Jackson and others, on motion of Bro. M. G. Hudson, the following Committee of five—M. G. Hudson, Wm. H. Rowell, B. D. Gray, Josiah Evans and J. Nelson—was appointed to take into consideration the various views of the brethren, and report to this body what was best to be done in the premises—no discussion to be allowed on said report.

The Association adjourned for dinner, to meet at 3 P. M.

FRIDAY, December 5th, 1872, 3 P. M.

The Association met pursuant to adjournment. Prayer by Elder J. H. Curry.

Report of Committee was then called for, read and adopted, which was as follows:

REPORT OF COMMITTEE.

WHEREAS, owing to the presence of yellow fever in Mobile, Elder Joseph Mitchell, Moderator of Providence Baptist Association, after conferring with the Mission Board, postponed the convening of the Association; and

WHEREAS, Many of the churches were not advised of the postponement, and sent delegates at the appointed time to Zion Church; and

WHEREAS, The delegates assembled, approved the action of the Moderator; and

WHEREAS, We believe the Delegates present as a whole, did not understand this approval to postpone the Association, and held what they deemed the Providence Baptist Association; Therefore, be it

Resolved, That the postponement by the Moderator was legal and proper, and therefore, the Association could not have been held legally without due notification to all the churches.

Resolved, That we recognize the honesty of purpose on the part of the Delegates assembled, and therefore, now legalize their action, and recognize it as the action of this body, and this shall be deemed an extra session with the same officers then and there chosen.

We respectfully and fraternally present the foregoing preamble and resolutions as our report, and beg to be discharged.

M. G. HUDSON, Chairman.

On motion of Bro. A. B. Woodfin, the report was adopted as a whole.

Then Bro. Joseph Nelson took the Chair, as Moderator.

On motion of Bro. D. P. Bestor, in absence of Bro. A. B. Couch, Bro. J. R. Malone was nominated and elected Clerk *pro tem.* of this body by acclamation.

Letters called for and read.

Letters (on motion of Bro. Mitchell) were only read from the churches not represented at Zion, and the names of Delegates to be enrolled according to the number each church is entitled to.

Brn. M. G. Hudson and D. P. Bestor, appointed to read said letters.

Names of Delegates enrolled, as follows:

Broad Street—J. H. Curry, M. G. Hudson, D. Rayford, E. B. Lott, C. Dreisbach and H. F. Acker.

St. Francis Street—A. B. Woodfin, Joseph Mitchell, Wm. Spence, C. E. Thames, R. F. Manly, J. C. Bush, J. C. Reynolds, E. S. Perryman, T. J. Bush, D. P. Bestor, J. S. Knight, R. Weaver, A. P. Bush, Jr., E. F. Horton, and Thos. H. West.

Bay Minette—V. E. Crawford, Samuel White, J. R. Thompson.

State Line—A. J. Gray, G. W. Marshall.

Salem—Josiah Evans, B. D. Gray. B. D. Gray was licensed to preach at last Conference of said Church.

On motion of Bro. A. B. Woodfin, letters were granted to the following Churches.

Mt. Pisgah, Palestine, Evans' Creek, County Line, Pleasant Valley, and Providence.

Petitionary letters were then called for and read:

Palmetto Street—R. H. Jones, G. A. Pearce, J. Odair, H. E. Anderson and James W. Turner.

The right hand of fellowship was extended by the Moderator to Bro. R. H. Jones, he being the only delegate present at that hour.

On motion of Bro. A. B. Woodfin, a Committee on Preaching was appointed, composed as follows: Rev. Wm. Spence, M. G. Hudson, D. P. Bestor, C. Dreisbach, R. H. Jones, E. S. Perryman—and requested to report at 10 A. M. to-morrow.

On motion of Bro. M. G. Hudson, a mass meeting at 7 P. M. Saturday, was appointed to discuss missionary matters and to raise funds to discharge our present debt, and to carry on the good work.

On motion of Bro. A. B. Woodfin, Sabbath Schools were made the special order for 11 A. M., to-morrow. Bro. Mitchell to deliver the Sunday School Address.

On motion of Bro. D. P. Bestor, the Association adjourned to meet at 10 A.M.

Prayer by Bro. Wm. Spence. Benediction by Bro. J. Nelson, Moderator.

SATURDAY, December 6th, 10.30 A. M.

The Association was called to order by the Moderator.

Prayer by Elder W. C. Batchelor.

Letters from Salem Church presented, read, and names of delegates enrolled, viz: Brns John L. Gray and Josiah Evans.

Treasurer's report was read, and on motion of Elder J. Mitchell, referred to Auditing Committee, composed of Brn. D. P. Bestor, A. J. Gray and W. H. Rowell.

Report of Committee on Preaching was read by Elder Wm. Spence, Chairman, and adopted, as follows:

Elder A. B. Woodfin to preach at Broad Street Church; Elder J. H. Curry at St. Francis Street Church, and Elder J. H. Rush at Palmetto Street Church, at 11 o'clock A. M., Sabbath.

Sunday Schools being the special order for this hour, that subject was taken up, and Elder J. Mitchell (appointed at Session of 1872) proceeded to address the body upon said subject. After Bro. M. concluded his speech, the following brethren, viz: H. P. Hanson, B. R. Jackson, M. G. Hudson, A. B. Woodfin, J. H. Curry, D. P. Bestor, R. H. Jones, Wm. Spence, W. C. Batchelor and J. Nelson were severally called upon, and responded in a speech upon the good subject of Sabbath Schools.

On motion of Bro. M. G. Hudson, the subject of Missions for the present year was referred to the following Committee, viz: Brn. W. H. Rowell, A. J. Gray, J. Evans, J. R. Thompson, E. B. Lott and D. P. Bestor, to report as early as practicable.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON DOMESTIC MISSIONS.

Your Committee on Domestic Missions beg leave to report:

That at the Association held at Zion Church, on the 11th, 12th and 13th of October last, Elder Charles Long was elected a Missionary to preach to the destitute within the bounds of this Association, at a salary of six hundred dollars for ten months, and that the amount collected and pledged at such Association be strictly appropriated to that purpose, and that all amounts contributed after such dates, shall be appropriated as the givers thereof may direct.

They further report, that $507.53 were raised at such Association by cash and individual pledges, and that such sum be applied strictly to the purpose for which it was raised, and that Bro. Long look to the individual pledges for his salary so pledged, and relieve this body from any responsibility for the same.

Your Committee further report, that several of the churches have asked for another Missionary, and that they recommend that another Missionary be put in the field by this Association, at such salary as the Association may name and think itself able to comply with.

The name of the Missionary and the salary of the same, this Committee think proper to leave entirely to the Association, without any recommendation from them.

Respectfully submitted,

WM. H. ROWELL, Chairman.

Adjourned to 3 P. M.

SATURDAY, December 6th, 3 P. M.

The Association met pursuant to adjournment. Prayer by the Moderator.

Elder J. Mitchell, Missionary, made his report, which was, upon motion of Bro. A. B. Woodfin, adopted.

REPORT OF MISSIONARY.

Your Missionary for the Associational year, ending October 10, 1873, reports as follows:

Miles traveled,	3500
Sermons preached,	264
Addresses,	73
Baptized,	19
Standing over for Baptism,	1
Received by Letter,	14

Have labored regularly with Salem Church, Waynesboro', and State Line, Miss; on the coast, between Mobile and New Orleans, at Handsboro, Tide Water Church—near Ocean Springs, and Moss Point; also visited Mount Vernon, on the Mobile and Alabama Grand Trunk Railroad. Visited Whistler several times during the year, and Oak Grove twice. On my second visit to Oak Grove I held a protracted meeting, which was a very good one, and I baptized four. Bro. C. Long was with me a part of the time. Visited Zion several times; also, Union Church one time. Held a protracted meeting with Salem Church, embracing the fourth Sabbath in July; had a large congregation—(no help): meeting pleasant and profitable. Also at a school house nine miles from Waynesboro'—met by Bro. Bowen, of Shubuta, who labored faithfully in the meeting. Was called away from this meeting by a telegram announcing the death of Bro. Washington Lott. The meeting was a precious one—a good many up for prayer. Also, with State Line Church, embracing the first Sunday in September, aided by Bro. R. P. Irvin. This was a precious meeting—two accessions by baptism and several by letter. It was well attended, and the Church much revived. Also, at Zion, which was blessed of the Lord. I baptized nine on Sabbath during the meeting.

I met Bro. Walne, Corresponding Secretary of the Mississippi Baptist State Board, at Tide Water Church, at Ocean Springs. He came there to explore the field, with a view of sending missionaries to the Mississippi Coast, under the Board. He did some good preaching, and explained his mission to the Church, and promised to send a missionary. I then advised the Church, as your missionary, to go under that Board, which they consented to do. The Church had previously secured a lot at Ocean Springs, with a view of building a good house. Bro. Walne agreed upon the part of his Board to furnish $500 to help build it. This is an important point, and once the Baptists can occupy the above named house they

will command the respect of the community, and wield a good influence, for they will have an educated and pious minister, as the present material is excellent, and will be satisfied with nothing less.

From Ocean Springs we went to Handsboro, where I was to constitute a Church at that time. Bro. Walne did here, also, some good preaching. The brethren, after consultation, agreed to go into the organization of a Church, and also agreed to build a fine meeting house, and to aid in support of a missionary to be sent to them by the Mississippi State Board. This is a very eligible and attractive point, and the congregations are composed of intelligent and enterprising people, and demand an intelligent and educated minister. The Church, though small, is composed of highly respectable and intelligent people, and must succeed. From there we went to Moss Point, embracing the third Sunday in September. At this point I was to constitute a Church. The Methodist brethren kindly tendered the use of their house to preach in. After divine service by Bro. Walne, at 11 A. M., we announced that we would constitute a Church in the school house at 3 P. M., which we did, with 17 members—16 female and 1 male. We appointed a committee of ladies to raise funds and to secure a lot to build upon. Said committee raised $800 in money, secured the lumber, shingles, brick and the lot, and will soon have a fine house up.

Bro. Walne, of Vicksburg, informs me by letter of date November 10, 1873, that the State Board has appointed Bro. Lomax to occupy the field on the coast, and that he would remove to that point by January 1st, 1874. Thus you will see that this entire coast is under the State Board of Mississippi, and that the Providence Baptist Association is relieved of that work. We have placed the work in good hands, but the Association has lost in money and good pledges for the next year, about $700.

During the winter, in my sickness, I was afraid I would have to give up the work. Bro. J. R. Malone volunteered to fill my place rather than I should leave the work. The Board accepted his services to aid me, and I find he was well received at Handsboro and Moss Point and other places, where he did some fine preaching—as I was informed, and helped largely to lay the foundation of the present good status at these points.

While this report appears meager, in comparison with former reports, yet I fully believe more has been accomplished for the Baptist cause during this missionary year, than during any one year since I have been your missionary.

You will please now permit me to call your attention to the large destitute field that should be occupied by your missionary: Bay Minette Church, on the Mobile and Montgomery Railroad, is composed of young members of promise, but poor. This Church was constituted some two years ago, when I baptized between 40 and 50, and entirely destitute, there being no minister near them. There are several other points on that road, in Baldwin, that deserve a missionary this coming year, where good can be done. This entire county, outside of the field of Bro. A. B. Couch, is destitute of a Baptist Minister, and is work enough for one missionary.

For want of time, could not explore the various points on the Grand Trunk R. R., but I understand there are several points that are entirely destitute of Baptist preaching.

On the Mobile and Ohio Railroad, I have had only time to labor regularly at State Line and Waynesboro'. Buckatunna, Deer Park and Beaver Meadow are interesting points, and ought to be occupied by your missionary. In the piney woods in Mobile county, between Mobile and the Mississippi State line, a missionary in the saddle could do a great deal of good.

Since the regular term at which your Association was to be held at Zion, which was postponed on account of yellow fever, I was instructed by the chairman of the Missionary Board, and afterwards by the Board itself, to continue my labors as your missionary until the present Association, which I have done.

I visited Salem Church, State Line, Escatawpa, Whistler, Zion, and Oak Grove, and preached for all these Churches, and trust that my labors were blessed.

All of which is respectfully submitted,

JOSEPH MITCHELL,
Missionary P. B. A.

If the missionary or missionaries are not kept in this field it is equivalent to abandoning the field, which I humbly trust *will not be done.*

J. M.

Report of Auditing Committee was read and adopted, as amended.

REPORT OF AUDITING COMMITTEE.

Your Committee to whom was referred for examination the Report of M. G. Hudson, Treasurer of the Mission Board of the Providence Baptist Association, beg leave to report:

That they have examined such report and find the statement correct, and that each charge is accompanied by a proper voucher therefor.

They further report, however, that by comparing such report with the report of the Missionary for Baldwin County to the last Association held at Zion Church, they find the amount received from Brook Cedron Church to be $10.00 less than he then reported to the Treasurer. That is to say—

Amount received from Brook Cedron, as shown by Treasurer's Report	$ 93 55
As shown by A. B. Couch's Report	103 55
Difference,	$ 10 00

Your Committee recommend that the report be read and filed, and that they be discharged.

D. P. BESTOR, Chairman.

*Ten Dollars was paid by Brook Cedron Church after report was rendered to Bro. Hudson, and included in report to Association.

A. B. COUCH.

REPORT OF FINANCE COMMITTEE.

The Churches of the Association named below, sent by their delegates for the various purposes of the Association:

Cash—			
Broad Street Church		$10 00	
Salem Church		3 00	
Palmetto Street Church		5 00	
Bay Minette "		1 50	
		$19 50	
Amount Cash collected Sunday Night		39 65—	$59 15
By Pledges from—			
Salem Church	$150 00		
State Line Church	150 00		
Bay Minette Church	100 00		
City	280 50—	$680 50	
Total			$739 65

The above is respectfully submitted by your Committee.

H. P. HANSON, Chairman.

On motion by Elder J. Mitchell, adjourned till 7 o'clock P. M.
Prayer by Elder J. Mitchell.

SATURDAY, December 6th, 7 P. M.

Met pursuant to adjournment. Prayer by Elder Mitchell.

On motion by Bro. M. G. Hudson, the Executive Board was divided—the new members appointed at the session held at Zion Church, to take charge of the field occupied by Elder C. Long, and the old members to continue as heretofore.

On motion by Bro. W. H. Rowell,

Resolved, 1st—That the Missionary Board of this Association be, and they are hereby instructed to liquidate, as early as possible, the debt yet due to Elder J. Mitchell, Missionary, for services rendered during last Associational year.

Resolved, 2d—That they be and are hereby empowered to employ Elder Mitchell as Missionary of this body for the current Associational year, provided that a sufficient amount shall be pledged by the Churches for his support.

Resolved, 3d—That in case the services of Elder Mitchell cannot be procured, the said Board be, and they are hereby authorized to employ any other suitable brother to labor as Missionary within our bounds.

On motion by Bro. Mitchell, delegates were appointed to the Southern Baptist Convention, to be held at Jefferson, Texas, in May next, as follows:

Brn. A. B. Couch, E. S. Perryman, W. A. Buck, A. P. Bush, C. E. Thames, R. Weaver, D. P. Bestor, James A. Reynolds, M. G. Hudson, E. B. Lott, Thomas C. Carter, J. R. Malone, J. P. May, Dudley Rayford, Joseph Mitchell, George A. Pearce, John H. Rush, H. P. Hanson, Joseph Nelson, B. R. Jackson, J. H. Curry.

On motion by Elder A. B. Woodfin, a Committee of three, viz: M. G. Hudson, E. S. Perryman and W. H. Rowell, to appoint a minister to preach the Introductory and Missionary sermon at next session, and report instanter. Said Committee reported as follows: Elder A. B. Woodfin to preach the Introductory Sermon, Elder J. H. Rush alternate; Elder J. H. Curry to preach the Missionary Sermon, Elder B. R. Jackson alternate. Brn. T. C. Carter and M. G. Hudson to deliver addresses on Sabbath Schools.

Resolved, That the Minutes of this meeting be printed and published as an appendix to the Minutes of the meeting held at Zion Church in October last.

The following report was unanimously adopted:

Your Committee on Preaching beg leave to make an additional report, appointing a meeting to-morrow night at St. Francis Street Church; Elder A. B. Woodfin to preach, Elder J. H. Curry to follow with an appeal, and a collection of money and pledges to follow.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Association be tendered to the brethren and sisters of Broad Street Church, for their liberal and fraternal entertainment of the delegates.

On motion, adjourned to meet at Whistler, on Saturday before the second Sabbath in September, 1874.

Singing by Elder Woodfin.

Prayer by Elder Wm. Spence.

JOSEPH NELSON, Moderator.

J. R. MALONE, Clerk, *pro tem.*

NOTE.—The vote, under the circumstances, at Zion Church, when Bro. Mitchell was there, could have no parliamentary bearing at all.

There had been no organization. No motion, while the delegates to any body are informally together, (except to organize) is entertainable, until the body is organized and properly officered. The people at Zion were together simply for devotional exercises. The speakers who advocated an expression at all upon the action of postponement, distinctly stated that they were willing to say that they believed that Bro. Mitchell and the other brethren with whom he conferred, thought they were doing for the best when they postponed the Association, and the question voted upon was: "All who are of the opinion that Bro. Mitchell and the other brethren thought they were doing for the best when they advertised the postponement of the Association, will say I." The whole thing was informal and worthless, except as an expression by the delegates present, that they were not disposed to censure for postponing, though they believed it was wrong unless it had been done in time for the delegates to get notice of it, and not leave their homes and families, and lose the time and incur the expense of going to the place of holding the Association to learn of its postponement. Therefore, the postponement was not endorsed by the delegates at Zion Church, and their proceedings did not need any action by the delegates at Broad Street Church to legalize them.

It is not denied that it is parliamentary and according to precedent and usage, for the Moderator or President of a body to postpone a meeting, provided it is done in due time.

A. B. COUCH.

TABLE OF STATISTICS.

CHURCHES.	When Const'd.	LOCATION.	PASTORS.	CLERKS.	Clerks' Postoffice.	Sabbath Worship.	Ad'tns.			Diminution.				
							Baptism.	Letter.	Restored.	Letter.	Exclusion.	Death.	Erasure.	Total
Broad Street	1850	Mobile, Ala	J. H. Curry	C. H. Driesbach	Mobile, Ala	Every	3	11		16	5			197
Brook Cedron	1845	Baldwin co., Ala	A. B. Couch	J. W. Stewart	Mobile, Ala	4th		1		3	0			461
Bay Minette	1870	Baldwin co., Ala	A. B. Couch	C. J. Campbell	Bay Minette, Ala	5th								55
County Line		Dismissed												
Escatawpa	1867	Escatawpa	J. H. Rush				1			3				15
Evans' Creek		Dismissed												
Fellowship	1856	Mobile co., Ala	J. H. Rush	F. M. Byrd	Beaver Meadow, M. & O. R. R.	3d	8	5						35
Mount Moriah		Not represented												
Marine Street	1858	Dissolved												
Mount Pisgah	1845	Dismissed												
Oak Grove		Mobile co., Ala		W. H. Pendarvis			4			6				73
Palestine		Jackson co., Miss	E. L. Roberts	T. J. Evans			3	2						23
Pleas't Valley		Dismissed												
Providence		Dismissed												
Palmetto St	1873	Mobile, Ala		S. W. Turner	Mobile, Ala	Every	7	14		2				70
Shell Banks	1858	Baldwin co., Ala	A. B. Couch	J. C. Nelson	Mobile, Ala	1st			2	4	1			20
St. Francis St	1845	Mobile, Ala	A. B. Woodliff	D. P. Bestor	Mobile, Ala	Every	22	19		19		1		360
Spring Hill	1870	Not represented												
Salem	1839	Waynesboro', Miss	J. Mitchell		Waynesboro', Miss	4th	1	2		10				87
State Line	1871	State Line, Miss	J. Mitchell	G. W. Bunch	State Line, Miss	4th	5	12						63
Shiloh	1872	Dissolved		A. J. Gray										
Tide Water	1847	Not represented												
Union	1826	Mobile co., Ala	B. R. Jackson	J. R. Deakle	Mobile, Ala	1st	1	2			6	1		20
Washington		Not represented												
Whistler	1870	Whistler, Ala	J. H. Rush	T. C. Gaston	Whistler, Ala	2d and 4th	5	31	2	2	5	1		113
Zion	1848	Mobile co., Ala		Wm. H. Rowell	Mobile, Ala	2d and 4th	15			6	5	1		123
					Total		70	100	9	63	19	7		1237

SUNDAY SCHOOL AND FINANCIAL TABLE.

CHURCHES.	SUPERINTENDT'S.	POSTOFFICES.	SUNDAY SCHOOL. Offic's & Teach'a.	Scholars.	Avg. Attendance	Conversions	Vols. in Library.	Papers taken.	FINANCIAL. Pastor's Salary.	Associat'al Fund.	Domestic Miss'ns	Foreign Missions.	Sunday School.	Miscellaneous.	Total.
Broad Street	M. G. Hudson	Mobile, Ala		127	65	1	63	115	1800 00	10 00	215 00		151 55		2177 55
Brook Cedron	J. Nelson	" "	Sta	tis	tics	not	giv	en.	150 00	2 00	2 00				152 00
Baymiletto															
County Line										1 50	1 50				1 50
Escatawpa	?														
Evans' Creek										3 00	3 00				3 00
Fellowship															
Mount Moriah															
Mount Pisgah										1 00	1 00				1 00
Oak Grove										2 50	2 50				2 50
Palestine															
Pleasant Valley															
Providence															
Palmetto Street	Geo. A. Pearce	Mobile, Ala	18	140	71				1000 00	5 00	5 00				1005 00
Shell Banks	H. P. Hanson	" "	5	35	15			20	286 20	3 00	3 00		5 00		297 20
St. Francis Street	E. A. Schaffer	" "	30	225	140	18		150	3800 00			740 00	225 50		7765 50
Salem	S. W. Leach	Waynesboro', Miss.		20	15			2	150 00						150 00
State Line									200 00	3 00	3 00				203 00
Union	J. A. Deakle	Mobile, Ala	5	25					75 00	3 00	3 00				78 00
Whistler	J. M. Jackson	Whistler, Ala		69	30	2	65		207 50	10 00	10 00		25 00	80 00	332 50
Zion	W. H. Rowell	Mobile, Ala	6		30	12				5 00	5 00				5 00
Total			59	640	386	34	131	285	6765 70	40 50	1115 00	740 00	400 73	80 00	11382 93